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Governor Patrick Proclaims August 19-25 Massachusetts Farmers' Market Week

BOSTON – Calling the 134 farmers' markets across the Commonwealth "essential to the vitality of Massachusetts farms," Governor Deval Patrick has proclaimed August 19-25 Massachusetts Farmers' Market Week. The week officially kicks off Monday, August 20, when Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Ian Bowles will read the Governor's proclamation at the 23rd Annual Massachusetts Tomato Contest at Boston's City Hall Plaza Farmers' Market.

Farmers' markets "help heighten public awareness of the agricultural diversity of Massachusetts and the benefits of buying local and preserving open space," according to Governor Patrick's proclamation. Shoppers have access to an array of freshly-harvested fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers, as well as local farm items such as maple syrup, honey, eggs, turkey products, baked goods, jams and jellies.

"By purchasing these products directly from farmers, consumers support local agriculture and gain a clear understanding about where their food comes from and how it's produced," Secretary Bowles said.

The Massachusetts Farmers' Market Week celebration on August 20 is coordinated by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR), along with the Federation of Massachusetts Farmers' Markets and the New England Vegetable and Berry Growers Association. The DAR publishes an annual list of Massachusetts farmers' markets, listing days, locations, times, and opening and closing dates for each market. The list is available at www.mass.gov/agr/massgrown/farmers_markets.htm. For a free copy of the Massachusetts Farmers' Market 2007 brochure, call 1-877-627-7476.